A Manifestation OF THE *LOVE of GOD unto all such as are convinced of TRUTH, and do not Obey it.*

THE breaking forth and dawning of the day is very pleasant unto such as have long walked and been wearied in a night of darkness, for by the appearance of the day there is a discovery of the crooked paths in which there hath been a sore travel whilst darkness over-spread; and in some measure there have many seen this day to dawn, and it hath been pleasant to them in its appearance, as making those things manifest, which in the darkness they could not see, and by the manifestation many have been convinced of the evil deed of darkness, and also of the Truth; and so, *the day-spring from on high hath visited, to give light to many that sat in darkness*, by which they see what is good and what is evil: but all have not obeyed, and therefore many are yet covered with darkness, notwithstanding they are convinced, and the Seed is yet in bondage though the Light hath shined; for many may be convinced of evil and not forsake it, and they also may be convinced of what is good and not come to live in it; and this is for want of obedience to the Light which visiteth and convinceth, and

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that is the ground why darkneſs ſtandeth and the Seed is burdened, for none can come out of darkneſs but in the Light which reproves it; and though People may be convinced of all the deeds of darkneſs, and the evil of them, yet if they do not obey the Light which convinceth, and deny thoſe deeds which the Light reproveth, there is a continuance in them, notwithſtanding there be a convincement in the conſcience to the contrary: and this is a diſobedient ſtate, by which the Light is denyed and not the darkneſs, and unto this ſtate there are many ſtripes belong; *for they that know their Maſters will and do it not, they muſt be beaten with many ſtripes*: Therefore you that be convinced with the Light, and are not yet come into obedience, ſo as to deny that which you are convinced is evil, and to live in that which you are convinced is good, be mindful to anſwer the requirings of God, and keep cloſe to the Light which convinceth you of that which is evil, and ſo love the Light and obey it, as to confeſs it and bear teſtimony to it; and whatſoever would let or hinder you for obeying, deny it, and take up the Croſs unto it; for many ſtumble at the Croſs, by which they are hindred from obeying the Truth; and that which ſtumbles at the Croſs, will deny Chriſt when he ſhould be confeſſed; *and they which deny him before men, he will deny them before his Father which is in Heaven*: (ſo mark) there is none that are to expect that Chriſt will *confeſs them before his Father in Heaven*, but as *they confeſs him before men upon earth*, and ſo come to be his Witneſſes upon Earth, in a true and faithful teſtimony, by denying the darkneſs, and confeſſing him *the Light*; and this is the Croſs which muſt be taken up before there be a true Diſciple; for they *that deny not themſelves, and take up the Croſs and follow Chriſt, they are not his Diſciples*; ſo a Diſciple is known by ſelf-denyal, and ſubmitting to the daily Croſs, that is a mark of a Diſciple, for by that they are known to follow Chriſt in his Light, as Children of obedience: now many may be convinced and yet not come to be Diſciples, becauſe they do not obey the Light unto ſelf-denyal, nor ſubmit unto the daily Croſs, and ſo keep that life and nature living which is to be crucified; and ſuch never come, in that ſtate, to be Gods Witneſſes upon earth, though they be convinced of what is Truth; therefore all are to examine what it is that hinders you from obeying the Truth, for if you do not ſearch it out with the Light, and ſo deny it, and take up the Croſs unto it, you

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will find it to be a hinderance to you all your dayes, and so you will never come to confess Christ before men, but, on the contrary, deny him; and then what will he do for you before his Father in Heaven, but as you have done unto him before men upon Earth? Now as you mind the Light which convinces you, it will let you see every particular thing that hinders you from obeying; for the Light will search unto it, and find it out, and make you sensible of it, and then you will see that you are in love with something more than Christ, and that you do not answer the Light as Children of Obedience, and so every particular thing which hinders you from obeying, will be manifest in the Light, as you mind it; and there you will know whether you love Father or Mother, Wife or Children, Houses or Lands, worldly Honour or Esteem, more then you love Christ, and how they have hindred you from obeying the Truth, and how scorn, and reproach, and persecution, which such suffer as live in the Truth, how those things have hindred you from obeying it; and so you will come to see in your selves what is the hinderance, as you mind the Light with which Christ enlightens you, and by which he convinceth you. For, have you not purposed sometimes to draw nigh, and have not those things hindered you? and when ye have purposed to go forward, have they not drawn you back again? and doth not the Seed of God travel in pain, as being oppressed with that nature which you should deny and crucifie? and is not that *Hagar* and her Son, which is to be cast out? for *Hagars* Son must not inherit with *Isaac* who is the Heir of Promise: therefore all wait in the Light with which Christ Jesus doth enlighten you, and be faithful to every manifestation of the Light in you; that as you are perswaded that Christ doth enlighten you, so you may be perswaded to obey the Light which doth convince you, and so through obedience came to witness Redemption and Salvation by his Power: for as you yeild your selves servants to obey him, he will turn you, and convert you, and work deliverance for you, and there you will know him in his power, who is able by his power to subdue all things to himself; and as you come to be converted by his power, you will feel his virtue and goodness in a sweet savour, for he loveth the Children of obedience, who are willing to turn unto him; and in your obedience unto him, his Life will rise in you, and there you will know the streams with which he refresheth

Choſen; and if you yet love him and follow him, you will come to know the River which maketh glad his Heritage; for until you be converted and turned unto God through obedience to the Light, you neither taſte nor feel the virtue of his Life, but ſit in the Land of Famine and ſore drought, and there you are as dry and unfruitful branches, that cannot bear fruit for want of nouriſhment; for until you obey the Light, and come out of Darkneſs, you are rooted in a bad ground, and bring forth unſavoury fruit, and whileſt that ſtandeth, the good Seed is hindred from ſprouting forth in its own nature, and there can be no fruit to Gods glory, but what the Seed brings forth in its own nature; for in the Seed is the Teſtimony by which God is glorified, and all born of the Seed are Gods Witneſſes upon earth, and they are not aſhamed to confeſs the Truth before men; for where any are convinced of Truth, and are aſhamed to confeſs it, there is not faithfulneſs unto that which convinceth, and ſo the Power is not felt that beareth teſtimony with boldneſs: and this maketh many to conform unto that which they are convinced is not the Truth; and to deny that which they are convinced is the Truth; ſo that where they ſhould confeſs, they deny; and where they ſhould deny, they confeſs; and here the teſtimony falleth, and the hands of evil-doers are ſtrengthened, and the diſobedient bring trouble upon their own conſciences, for there is no true peace with God in a diſobedient ſtate. But ſome may ſay, *We ſee many that have long profeſſed the Truth, that do not ſo fully anſwer all things in a clear Teſtimony; and we alſo ſee others, that ſeemingly did bear a large Teſtimony, and yet are turned again into the courſe of the world: And ſeeing ſome fail, and others fall, we are ready to queſtion, whether it be really Truth in the ground, becauſe Truth is able to preſerve either from failing or falling?* If thou give way, and joyn unto ſuch reaſonings and queſtionings, thou mayeſt ſoon be hindred from obeying the Truth; yea if thou waſt going forward, ſuch things would draw thee back again, and ſome have ſuffered loſs in that very place; for it is the work of the enemy to draw the eye abroad to keep his own Kingdom ſtanding at home, and to effect his deſign, he ſets his own work in others to be viewed; for if thou that makeſt ſuch an Objection, doſt but mind the Light and Truth in thy own Conſcience, and keep thy eye into that, thou wilt ſee and diſcern that ſuch failings and fallings come to paſs by yeelding to temptations, by which the mind is enticed and drawn

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from the Truth, and ſo thou wilt ſee the Truth ſtand clear in it ſelf notwithſtanding ſuch things may happen unto ſome that have long profeſſed it : For by ſuch queſtionings the Enemy labours to hinder thee from obeying the Truth in thy ſelf, becauſe ſome that have profeſſed it fail in performance, and others fall back and abide not; now if thou mind the Truth in thy ſelf, thou wilt ſee that ſuch things are not of or from the Truth, but of the Enemy; and thou wilt alſo ſee that it is the Enemy in thee which draws out thy mind to look abroad, and thereby to hinder thee from minding and obeying Truth in thy ſelf; and if he can work his work, he then ſaves his own Kingdom, and holds thee Captive under his power; but if thou mind the Light in thine own Conſcience, thou wilt ſee what Truth is in it ſelf, and if thou love it; to obey and follow it, thou wilt witneſs a going forward in it, and that will take away all occaſion of ſtumbling from before thee, and the Teſtimony of Truth will ſpring and live in thee, and as thou liveſt in that, it will preſerve and keep thee; and then the failings and fallings of ſuch as do not live and abide in the Truth, will not come nigh thee, and ſo thou wilt witneſs a growth in the Truth, though ſome may fail and others may fall; and that will cauſe thee to be more in love with Truth, becauſe it preſerves thee; for the danger lyeth in looking forth, by which the Enemy hath an advantage to deceive, and ſo the eye is more abroad, and taking notice of what others do amiſs, than it is at home to behold Truth in its own naked ſimplicity, innocency and purity; and then the Enemy begetteth hard thoughts of Truth, becauſe ſome fail and others fall, and that muſt needs hinder from obedience to the Truth, where it is ſo. Therefore ſeeing the Enemy hath ſuch cunning devices to deceive thee; thou ſhouldeſt watch to the Light with which Chriſt Jeſus doth enlighten thee, and wait in the Light for power to reſiſt thy Enemy, and ſo when he would break in upon thee, the Light will lift up it ſelf a ſtandard againſt him, and then thou wilt know where the Croſs ſtandeth, and what is to be croſſed when it moveth; and as thou abideſt in the Croſs to every motion that would draw out thy mind from the Truth, ſo thou wilt come to receive Truth in its own power, life and virtue, and in the Truth thou wilt receive ſtrength to go forward through all oppoſitions that would hinder thee, or drive thee back, and the Light and Power will take away

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ſtumbling-blocks from before thee, if thou be willing to go forward in obedience, and that will make the yoke eaſie to thee, and the way plain before thee; and then thou wilt come to feel what Truth is in it ſelf, and what it is unto thee, and that will put the Queſtioner down, becauſe thou art come to underſtand that to be true which he queſtioneth. Oh therefore love the Truth, as nothing may hinder thee any longer from obeying it; for if thou ſo love it, thou wilt be drawn by it to live in it, and bear Teſtimony to it, and that will free thee from thoſe burdens which thou beareſt in the diſobedience; for whileſt the corrupt and diſobedient nature liveth above the Seed, there is a burdened Conſcience, and a wounded Conſcience, and a troubled Conſcience; but as the Light is obeyed, it worketh by its own power, and purgeth out corruptions, by which the oppreſſed cometh to be eaſed: And ſo thou wilt come to receive Faith in the power, and thereby get victory over the world, and over the fleſh, and over the devil, which is thy Enemy; and then thou wilt come to witneſs a growth in grace and godlineſs, and the Seed will bring forth the fruit of its own nature in thee, and thy Teſtimony will be found to Gods glory, and that will multiply peace and bleſſing upon thee; therefore let not the world entangle thee, nor ſcorn or reproach diſcourage thee, nor perſecution affright thee, but yeeld thy ſelf to obey the Light with which Chriſt Jeſus doth enlighten thee, for it will be better for thee *to ſuffer affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*; but *if thou run with the multitude to do evil, thou wilt fall into the ſame deſtruction*, and then thy ſorrow will be heavy upon thee, and thy perplexity a perpetual miſery. *Oh that thou wouldeſt conſider the things which belong to thy peace, before calamity come upon thee*, and do not ſtand at ſuch a diſtance from the Light which convinceth thee; for now there is a door open, and thou knoweſt not how ſoon it may ſhut upon thee; and now is the day of ſalvation, and thou art not ſure how long it may be continued to thee: therefore believe in the Light whilſt thou haſt the Light, that thou mayeſt be a child of Light; for until thou come to be a child of Light, and to walk in the Light, thou art not in the Saints fellowſhip and inheritance, though with the Light thou be convinced; So wait to learn of the Light as thy Teacher, and follow the Light as thy Leader, that thou mayeſt not only ſtand in the knowledge of what thou

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ſhouldeſt deny, but deny it; nor only ſtand in the knowledge of what thou ſhouldeſt live in, but live in it: And ſo ungodlineſs and worldly luſts will die, and righteouſneſs and godlineſs will ſpring up and live, and in that nature thou wilt bear a right Image after him that hath created thee; and as thou learneſt thou wilt underſtand more perfectly; for by learning, thy underſtanding will be opened and informed, and that will make thee of a good underſtanding in heavenly things; Therefore be mindful to learn of Chriſt Jeſus as thy Teacher, and follow him as thy Leader and Way unto God, *for none can come to the Father but by him, nor none can inherit Life but who are born of him*; and as thou waiteſt to learn, thy underſtanding will be enlarged, and then live in that which gives thee underſtanding, and ſo thy ignorance will vaniſh away, and ſound wiſdom will take place, and thou wilt there ſee *Chriſt Jeſus in the beauty of his holineſs*, and receive conſolation in the virtue of his Life, and ſo thou wilt be able to bear teſtimony to him from a good underſtanding of him; and if thou here ſtand faithful, he will be with thee in all trials which come upon thee becauſe of thy Teſtimony, and thou wilt know a hiding-place in ſtormes, and a ſure refuge in diſtreſs; for as thou receiveſt Chriſt Jeſus in his Light, and in his Light abideſt, thou art with him of whom it is ſaid, *that he liveth*, and there thou haſt darkneſs under thy feet as a foot-ſtool and treadeſt upon the high places of the Earth, by which thou comeſt to be unloofed from all entanglements, and to be freed from all burdens, and to rejoyce in the glorious Liberty; and ſo thou comeſt to ſit down in a quiet habitation, and in a ſure dwelling, and to feel the preſence of the Lord God, and peace and ſatisfaction in it. And as ſome may be hindred from obeying the Truth, in not minding to follow it, ſo ſome may be hindred from obeying the Truth in running forwardly before it; and ſo one may lie queſtioning and lingring, and the other may run haſtily in preſuming; and this is a diſobedient ſtate as is the firſt; For if there be not a ſtanding in the fear, there may be an intruding into thoſe things which have not been ſeen, and thereby the fleſhly mind may vainly be puffed up; and where this commeth to paſs, there is not a *holding of the Head, from which all the Body, by joynts and bands having nouriſhment miniſtred and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* And ſo a haſty and forward willer and runner is in the ſame ſtate of

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disobedience as is the backward Lingerer; for the Light is not minded as a Leader by either; And in this disobedient state of intruding and presuming, the Seed of God is held in great bondage with corruption. So all are to mind the Light by which they may see their present states and conditions, and what the Light maketh manifest to be a hinderance from obeying the Truth, to deny it and take up the Cross unto it, and then the Light will draw such forward, as are questioning and lingering, and pull such back again as are intruding and presuming; and so the way of peace and life will be witnessed by all such as are obedient, and the Lord God will manifest himself unto them, and shew them his salvation, and they will find *a sure resting place in him that lives for ever*; and here every one will know not only a good beginning, but also a good ending, and then they *will finish their course in joy*, and not *in grief and sorrow*; and so all walking in true obedience to the Light, there is no occasion of stumbling, nor no occasion of failing or falling, either by lingring or presuming; but as the Light convinceth, so it will lead, redeem and save; and that is the gathering power, and preserving power of the Lord, and in that is the unity and fellowship of the Saints; and the mind which humbleth it self unto it, and liveth in it, is directed and ordered by it to the praise and glory of Almighty God.

William Smith.

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